

ALBERT HAMMER.

JANUARY 26, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. POOLE, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 9620.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9620) granting a pension to Albert Hammer, respectfully report as follows:

This soldier served as a private in Company E, One hundred and twenty-third Illinois Volunteer Infantry, from February 29, 1864, to June 20, 1865, and was honorably discharged therefrom. He filed a claim June 30, 1880, for pension on account of injury to left shoulder and breast, and neuralgia, which claim he established, and he is now pensioned at \$8 per month for those disabilities. He claims disease of heart and lungs as results of his injuries, but the Pension Office has declined to accept them as such. At his last medical examination by the board of United States surgeons, at Newton, Ill., January 4, 1893, he was rated four-eighths for injury to shoulder, four-eighths for injury to breast, four-eighths for rheumatism, six-eighths for gastric catarrh, four-eighths for piles and disease of rectum, four-eighths for neurasthenia and debility, and ten-thirtieths for deafness (aggregating \$36 per month), and the board said: "Disability from all causes equivalent to loss of hand or foot."

If all these disabilities could be established as due to service, as he claims them to be, he would be entitled for these to \$24 per month, but this is not all. He received severe and permanent injuries in the service of his country before his enlistment, and when he was a boy of 17.

He then lived in Crooked Creek Township, Jasper County, Ill. A company had been recruited in that township for the Ninety-seventh Illinois Volunteer Infantry, and a number of them had deserted and returned to the vicinity of their homes. The provost-marshal in charge of that district had made repeated efforts to apprehend these deserters, but without success, as, by reason of their thorough knowledge of the country and the absence of such knowledge on the part of the provost-marshal and his deputies and assistants, they were always able to evade the officers. Claimant, who as a boy knew many of the deserters, was employed to locate them and assist in their apprehension, and while so assisting he was attacked by a deserter named William I. Chapman, and was cut with a knife, the wounds being thus described by Dr. L. W. P. Gilbert, who attended him at the time:

First. A very severe and dangerous knife wound near the right eye on the right cheek. Not less than three distinct cuts had been made at and near this place.

Second. A very severe and dangerous knife wound on the left shoulder, the flesh being laid open to the bone in three different places.

Third. The left index finger was cut almost off at the second joint.

Fourth. Two cuts in the back of the head and in the neck.

Fifth. One cut in the right side just above the point of the hip. This cut extended into the abdominal cavity and was a very dangerous wound.

Sixth. One cut to the right of the spinal column and in the small of the back above the hip bone. This cut was about 3 inches deep and a very ugly and dangerous wound, causing the patient great pain and agony.

In order to properly dress the above wounds it was necessary to take a large number of stitches, the wounds being very painful, and some of them of a very dangerous character.

George W. Fairgrieve, M. D., examined claimant January 4, 1897, and he describes these wounds, and concludes as follows:

The foregoing condition is the result of wounds received by Mr. Albert Hammer that have left him in a condition that totally unfits him for the performance of manual labor.

Claimant was never rated for those wounds by the Pension Office examining surgeons, because, since they were not pensionable under the general law, they were never alleged by claimant. In the opinion of this committee, however, they were received while claimant was acting in the service of his country, and were directly due to such service, and therefore the passage of the bill is recommended, after being amended as follows:

In line 4 strike out the word "fifty" and insert in lieu thereof the word "twenty-four."